

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**November 18, 2008**

**A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on November 18, 2008 pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Chairman Dale Venturini and Commissioners Jeff Hirsh, Jason Fowler, Dave Duffy, Bernie Buonanno and Paul MacDonald.**

**Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill and Betty Sullivan, RICCA; Martha Sheridan, Neil Schriever, Gail Rubenstein and Alicia Philippe, PWCVB; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Deb Tuton and Arlene Oliva, RICC; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, Lisa Coelho, Jodi Duclos and Eleanor SanAntonio, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Steve Habi, VMA; Tom Crocker, Sportservice; Lynne McCormick, City of Providence; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Bob Bromely, Senate Fiscal Office and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.**

**There was no quorum at 12:35 PM therefore Ms. Venturini delayed calling the official meeting to order and approval of the minutes of the October meeting.**

## **DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER**

**Ms. Venturini stated that this would be the first presentation utilizing the new reporting requirements from our marketing teams. Ms. Venturini reminded the Committee that she had asked to see a layout of goals and the direction that the team is taking to reach those goals.**

**Mr. Duffy said that he would like to see a tracking to the Marketing Plans.**

**Ms. Venturini asked that Mrs. Cohen begin her presentation. Mrs. Cohen began by presenting an overview of the Dunkin' Donuts Center's Marketing Plan. She said that she thought a review of the plan would remind the Committee of the marketing, advertising and sales objectives. Mrs. Cohen stated we need to maximize the opportunities to market the Dunkin' Donuts Center, Rhode Island Convention Center and the VMA as a full service sports, entertainment, arts and convention complex and create an awareness of the Dunkin' Donuts Center and the Complex with promoters, industry leaders and convention and meeting planners. Mrs. Cohen noted the importance of working with the Dunkin' Donuts Center's primary tenants to support their marketing efforts. She said that we should expand our marketing efforts utilizing state-of the-art technology. Mrs. Cohen stated that the development of sales opportunities to increase sales of advertising within the Dunkin' Donuts Center is very important to maintaining revenue for**

advertising signage throughout the building. Ms. Venturini thanked Mrs. Cohen for her presentation but noted that the committee wanted to know the goals and to quantify the progress made in reaching those goals. Ms. Venturini asked Mrs. Cohen if she could present the results at November's Board meeting.

## **PROVIDENCE/WARWICK CVB**

Ms. Sheridan was pleased to report that the PWCVB had been awarded accreditation from the Destination Marketing Association International Accreditation Program. Ms. Sheridan stated that PWCVB will be receiving the DMAI accreditation. The CVB demonstrated a commitment to quality programs and services. Ms. Sheridan said that the PWCVB is one of only eighty fully accredited CVB's in the country out of over six hundred sixty Destination Marketing Organizations. Ms. Venturini congratulated Martha and the CVB team. Ms. Venturini stated that we have to celebrate the good news especially at a time when there is so much bad news. Mr. Schriever began the CVB's presentation. Mr. Schriever reminded the Committee of some of the objectives of the 2009 Marketing Plan. Mr. Schriever's presentation contained a list of objectives as well as target markets. He said that the CVB had set a goal of twelve bookings for the first quarter and although that goal was not reached there are more tentative bookings for the facility than in the first quarter of 2008. Mr. Schriever stated that the CVB set a goal of 180 prospecting calls for the first quarter and the actual number of calls was 208. Mr. Schriever noted that the number of customer contacts

has increased and that there have been thirty one site inspections compared to the goal of twenty four. Ms. Venturini said that perhaps she was not clear in her instructions. Ms. Venturini asked the Commissioners if they understood what she was looking for in the reports. Mr. Fowler said that more emphasis should be focused on events that have been booked. Mr. Schriever said that was the format of the former report and that he understood that Ms. Venturini was looking for a comparison of the Marketing Plan goals to actual. Ms. Venturini said that the partners should give the meat and potatoes of where we stand with the goals. Discussions ensued regarding the presentations. Mr. Fowler asked if there was anything that the Commissioners could do to increase events at the complex. Ms. Sheridan noted that the report includes only larger room night groups. Mr. Fowler asked if we could get a report showing how much revenue for the State and the City is produced because of the facilities. Ms. Sheridan noted that those numbers are included in the CVB's annual report that she would share with the Commissioners at the next meeting.

Ms. Venturini reminded the Committee that Lynne McCormick had been invited to present the results of the City's branding exercise. Ms. McCormick began a Power Point Presentation that illustrated the concepts that the City of Providence has adopted. Ms. McCormick noted that Providence the Creative Capitol had been chosen as the theme for the branding. Mr. Duffy asked what kind of budget the City has to work with. Ms. McCormick said that the budget is restricted.

**Mr. McCarvill said that with a limited budget your job will be more difficult. He said that cooperation with the Mall and the Convention Center Authority to piggyback on this concept would be helpful. Mr. Duffy said that something needs to happen relatively soon. Ms. McCormick noted that she would like to bring the airport into the discussions. Ms. Venturini thanked Ms. McCormick for her time and asked her to keep us informed if we can help in any way.**

## **VMA**

**Steve Hahl reported that a new banner has been ordered to be installed above the front doors of the theater. He said that people do not know what the building is and we want to let them know that it is a theater and not the front desk of the hotel or a museum. Mr. Hahl reported that Kristallnacht was the first sold out event in thirty five years. He said that the Temple restaurant in the hotel was booked solid. Mr. Duffy noted that John Barry had spoken highly of Mr. Hahl and the new attitude of the staff at the facility. Mr. Hahl reported that Mannheim Steamroller is doing very well. Mr. Hahl also noted that the VMA is holding a hat and mitten drive in conjunction with the show.**

**Mr. McGinn presented a Fiscal Year 2009 Marketing Plan update for the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn reported that at the end of the first quarter the Convention Center is on track to reach the goals set in the plan. Mr. McGinn reported on upcoming public shows. He said that a Fall Bridal Show will be a new event for the building as well as**

a Wine show, Chili Cook Off, the Basketball Fan Fair and a Christmas Bazaar. Mr. McGinn said that the Convention Center's Trade Shows and Convention business continues to be strong. Mr. McGinn said that in the month of October the National Scrabble Association and the International Association for Food Protections had signed contracts for events in 2009 and 2012 respectively. Mr. McGinn stated that a phone blitz had been held on November 5th and twenty leads had been generated as a result of the blitz. Mr. Fowler asked if the phone blitz was held quarterly. Mr. McGinn answered that it is a quarterly sales initiative.

Ms. Venturini reported that Cheryl Cohen, Amanda Marzulo and Kim Keough would be revising the web design RFP. She also asked that a meeting be set up to begin discussions on the branding of the Complex in early December.

Noting that a quorum was now present, Ms. Venturini sought a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Duffy and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the minutes of the October meeting.

Ms. Venturini asked if there were any other business. Hearing none she sought a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Duffy it was unanimously

**VOTED: to adjourn at 2:10 pm**